

4 November 1981

MSK-1017

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director, FBIS

THROUGH : Chief, Operations Group

SUBJECT : Monthly Report--Seoul Bureau--October 1981

I. GENERAL

The Chief/E&PS and the Bureau Chief visited Swaziland 22-29 October to initiate preparations for the establishment of the new Swaziland Bureau. In the view of a somewhat biased observer, Mbabane offers a number of amenities not necessarily expected of a town of 25,000 people: several very nice restaurants and hotels; at least one genuine U.S.-style supermarket offering a wide range of products, if at somewhat higher prices than Stateside and of more limited variety; a number of stores offering a wide selection of clothing, stationery supplies, magazines, current books and toys; and a number of facilities for sports, including golf, tennis, squash and horseback riding. As a town roughly two blocks wide and four blocks long, it doesn't exactly qualify as a bustling metropolis, but the surrounding countryside offers great scenic beauty. (An attempt to view the wildlife of the area met with mixed results. Little wild game was seen during a drive into the Mlilwane Wild Life Sanctuary near Mbabane, but that was not altogether a cause for lament when it was necessary to walk about 2 miles out of the park due to car failure in the middle of the sanctuary.)

The Embassy occupies the top two floors of the rather small eight-story Swazi Central Bank building, with AID occupying the sixth floor, and Swazi offices taking up the first five floors. While the Embassy itself is small -- nine Americans -- the addition of FBIS will increase the size of the official American community (ICA and Peace Corps also have offices there) to some 25 people and their families. A good number of those now in Mbabane have either already been in country for longer than 2 years (one almost 5 years) or are planning to extend beyond their normal tours.

II. OPERATIONS

A. Monitorial/Editorial

1. The Bureau's survey of North Korean regional radios, initiated in September, continued during the month.

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All programs sampled thus far have conclusively reaffirmed the results of past surveys, showing that the regional radios devote their local newscasts entirely to very low-level material, primarily the labor achievements of individuals or single units.

2. Korean output during the month was more than double the previous month's total, notably including a doubling of output from the six major Seoul Korean-language papers. This resulted partly from the tendency of the papers to devote somewhat more attention than previously to sensitive topics, including mild criticism of the government.
3. A BBC request for the Bureau to record Magadan Russian newscasts for processing in London was referred to Okinawa Bureau, whose Russian capability makes it easier to keep such recording tasks on track. The Bureau is continuing to record two stations that Okinawa cannot monitor (Petropavlovsk-Kamchatskiy and Yuzhno-Sakhalinsk) for BBC processing. In the first three months of sending recordings to the BBC, the Summary of World Broadcasts published 12 briefs from Soviet Far East radios: 6 from Vladivostok; 1 from Khabarovsk; 2 from Petropavlovsk-Kamchatskiy; and 3 from Yuzhno-Sakhalinsk.

B. Technical

The last vestiges of the IBM era passed from the scene when the IBM recorders/transcribers used by the Bureau's Korean Unit for Pyongyang and Seoul recording/processing were replaced by cassette equipment. For a long time the monitors had felt more comfortable using the IBM equipment, which was somewhat more convenient to operate, in covering stations with a high potential for urgent material, but had gradually grown accustomed to the cassette equipment in handling other coverage. The Bureau's stock of IBM equipment (30 recorders, 17 transcribers and 15 control units), plus 4 dictaphone machines and a transformer, was sold at an Embassy disposal sale for \$745. ← Logs

III. ADMINISTRATION

A. Personnel

1. Okinawa editor filled in on the editorial desk on TDY 16-30 October during the Bureau Chief's absence, STAT

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which coincided with the delayed Hawaiian honeymoon of Bureau editor [] and his wife.

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B. Building and Grounds

Remodeling of the Bureau, aimed at eliminating wasted space and expanding several rooms, was completed during the month. The former Russian Unit was cut in half and turned into a TV processing room. The other half, along with other unused space, was used to roughly double the size of the Korean Unit. The editorial room was also significantly expanded, and the teletype room enlarged slightly, and both rooms were wood panelled. The result has been a noticeable improvement in the physical layout and appearance of the Bureau.



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Chief, Seoul Bureau, FBIS /

Attachments:

Production Report
Engineering Report

cc: Chief, []
Chief, Okinawa Bureau

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